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## SECOND REPLY BRIEF TO FINAL ACTION

REPLY TO PTO ACTION IN USSN 09/892,359 (COMPLETE CLAIM SET WITH STATUSINDICATIONS AND ALL IN CLEAN TEXT PER § 1.121CLAIMS( one~~8~~ amended)

1. (original) A rigid tubular member of a variable length formed from sheet steel stock in which the member sidewalls are generally planar throughout their length and adapted to be custom-fitted and conjoined with at least one rigid surface of another member, the tubular member being provided with linear groovings along at least one planar surface to permit controlled separation of at least one sidewall thereof along the groovings, such tubular member comprising:

- (a) a transverse configuration which is rectangular in cross-section and has open longitudinal ends; and
- (b) a first pair of externally-placed, linear groovings arrayed in parallel with each of the groovings being located proximal to each of the two seams of a single member sidewall in one planar surface of the member, and each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial finger of one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation.

(once amended)

2. (original) The tubular member of Claim 1 wherein a second pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in an opposing planar surface of the member, with each of the groovings being located proximal to one of the elongate set in the opposing planar surface, and each of the second pair of groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial second finger from a second sidewall end segment from the adjoining two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the

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transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation.

(once amended)

3. (original) The tubular member of Claim 2 wherein a third pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in at least one of the third and fourth planar surfaces of the member, having the same juxtaposition as did each of the first and second pairs, and being of substantially the same depths as the first and second pairs of groovings to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial third finger from a third sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments.

(once amended)

4. (original) A rigid tubular member of a variable length formed from sheet steel stock, in which the member sidewalls are generally planar throughout their length and adapted to be custom-fitted and conjoined with at least one planar surface of another member, the tubular member being provided with linear groovings along at least one planar surface to permit controlled separation of at least one sidewall thereof along the groovings, such tubular member comprising:

(a) a transverse configuration which is rectangular in cross-section and has open longitudinal ends; and

(b) a first pair of externally-placed linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, with each such grooving located coincident with the two external linear seams of the tubing located on the elongate edges of one planar surface thereof, and with each of such groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial first finger from a first sidewall end segment from the adjacent sidewall end segments.

(once amended)

5. (original) The tubular member of Claim 4 wherein a second pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in an opposing planar surface of the member, with each of the groovings being located coincident with the external linear seams of the tubing

and on the opposing elongate edges of one planar surface thereof, and with each of the second pair being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial second finger from a second sidewall end segment from the adjoining two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation.

(once amended)

6. (original) A rigid tubular member of a variable length formed from sheet steel stock in which the member sidewalls are generally planar throughout their length adapted to be custom-fitted and conjoined with at least one rigid surface of another rigid member, the tubular member being provided with linear groovings along at least one planar surface to permit controlled separation of at least one sidewall thereof along the groovings, such tubular member comprising:

(a) a transverse configuration which is rectangular in cross-section and has open longitudinal ends; and

(b) a first pair of internally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, with each of the groovings being located coincident with the two internal linear seams of one planar surface of a tubing sidewalls, thereof, with each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial first finger from one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end at the points of separation.

(once amended)

7. (original) The tubular member of Claim 6 wherein a second pair of internally placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in the opposing planar surface of the member, with each of the groovings being located coincident with the two elongate seams in the opposing planar surface, and each of the second pair being of a sufficient depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial second finger from one sidewall end segment from the

adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end at the points of separation.

8. ~~(original)~~ <sup>(once amended)</sup> A rigid tubular member of a variable length formed from sheet steel stock in which the member sidewalls are generally planar throughout their length adapted to be custom-fitted and conjoined with at least one rigid surface of another member, the tubular member being provided with linear groovings along at least one planar surface to permit controlled separation of at least one sidewall along the groovings, adapted to be fitted to other surfaces, such tubular member comprising:

- (a) a transverse configuration which is rectangular in cross-section and has open longitudinal ends;
- (b) a first pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, with each of the groovings being located proximal to each of the two seams of a single member sidewall in one planar surface of the member; and,
- (c) a first pair of internally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, with each of the groovings being located coincident with the internal linear seams of a first planar surface tubing sidewalls, of the first planar surface thereof, with the combination of the internal and external groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial first finger from one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end at the points of separation.

9. ~~(original)~~ <sup>(once amended)</sup> The tubular member of Claim 8 wherein:

- (a) a second pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in the opposing planar surface of the member, with each of the groovings being located

proximal to one of the elongate seams in an opposing planar surface; and,

(b) a second pair of internally placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in the opposing planar surface of the member, and disposed on the opposing elongate edge of the opposing planar surface, with each of the groovings being located coincident with one of the elongate seams in the opposing planar surface, and with the combination of the internal and external groovings being of a sufficient depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial first finger from one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end at the points of separation.

(once amended)  
10. (original) The tubular member of Claim 1 having a rectangular cross-section, wherein the internal span of the one opposing pair of sidewalls have depending end segments which are adapted to tightly engage the external span of a complementary pair of sidewalls on a second tubular member of identical cross dimensions.

(once amended)  
11. (original) A pair of conjoined tubular members of variable length and like rectangular cross-sections, formed from sheet steel stock, each having a narrower internal dimensional span and a comparatively wider external dimensional span wherein:

(a) the internal span of one opposing pair of sidewalls of a first member which is left intact, while at least one of the complementary end sidewalls of a second member and as to the one end sidewall it includes a first pair of externally-placed, linear groovings arrayed in parallel with each of the groovings being located proximal to one of the elongate opposing seams in one planar surface of the member, and each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial finger from one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity

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of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation which has been flared outwardly and fixedly and so that:

(b) the internal dimensional span of the first pair of sidewalls of the second member snugly straddles the narrower external dimensional span of the other intact first member for purposes of member conjoining at a point along the longitudinal dimensions of the first tubular member.

(once amended)

12. (original) The conjoined tubular pair of Claim 11 wherein the straddling second member is mounted upon the other first member at a substantially right angle.

(once amended)

13. (original) The conjoined tubular pair of Claim 11 wherein the straddling second member is mounted upon the other first member at an acute angle.

(once amended)

14. (original) The conjoined tubular pair of Claim 11 wherein each of two or more flared fingers of the divergent sidewall end segments are provided with a substantially central perforation, which perforations are adapted to align themselves with a complementary set of perforations provided in the sidewalls of the other conjoined member, so as to permit the passage therethrough of two or more interconnecting and fastener members.

(once amended)

15. (original) A pair of conjoined tubular members of variable length and rectangular cross-section both formed from sheet steel stock having a narrower external dimensional span and a comparatively wider internal dimensional span, wherein the external dimensional span of the opposing pair of sidewalls of the first member is left intact, while at least one of the end sidewalls of the second member includes:

(a) a first pair of externally-placed, linear groovings arrayed in parallel with each of the groovings being located proximal to each of the two seams of a single member sidewall in one planar surface of the member, and each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to

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facilitate separation under force of at least an initial finger from one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation and which has been flared outwardly and fixedly, so that:

(b) the internal dimensional span of the second member tightly straddles the unflared end sidewalls of the external narrower dimension of the first member at its one longitudinal end, providing at least three sidewall end segments of the second member contacting the first member.

(once amended)

16. (original) A pair of conjoined tubular members each of variable length and rectangular cross-section, formed from sheet steel stock, each having a narrower external dimensional span and, on the opposing sides, a comparatively wider, internal dimensional span of the remaining two sides, wherein:

(a) first pair of externally-placed, linear groovings arrayed in parallel with each of the groovings being located proximal to one of the elongate opposing seams in one planar surface of the second member, and each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial finger from one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation.

(b) a second pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in an opposing planar surface of the second member, with each of the groovings being located proximal to one of the elongate seams in the opposing planar surface, and each of the second pair of groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial second finger from a second sidewall end segment from the adjoining two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall

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end segment at the end point of separation.

(c) one opposing pair of sidewall end segments of the second member are flared angularly relative to the intact first member sidewall and seat upon an external planar surface of the first member sidewall;

(d) while at least one of the other end segments of the second member has been flared outwardly and fixedly so that:

(e) the opposing pair of sidewall end segments of the second member are stepped out and straddles the external dimensional span of the first intact tubular member.

(once amended)

17. (original) The pair of tubular members of Claim 16 wherein the first member sidewall end segments and the intact second member sidewalls are each provided with a substantially central perforation, which perforations are adapted to align themselves with a complementary set of perforations in the underlying intact second member, so as to permit the passage therethrough of two or more interconnecting and fastening members.

(once amended)

18. (original) A tubular member and a right angle member conjoined and each being of variable length and rectangular cross-section, formed from sheet steel stock, wherein at least one of the sidewall end segments of the angle member is flared angularly relative to one intact tubular member sidewall and seats upon the external planar surface of the intact tubular member sidewall, wherein as to the angle member a first pair of externally placed, linear groovings are located proximal to a single seam with each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of an initial finger from one of the sidewall end segments.

(once amended)

19. (original) The rigid tubular member of Claim 1 wherein the material of construction is a thermoplastic resin extruded to a formed member and retaining its structural integrity under bearing load.

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(once amended)

20. (original) A pair of conjoined tubular members each of variable length and rectangular cross-section both formed from sheet steel stock, wherein:

(a) a first pair of externally-placed, linear groovings arrayed in parallel with each of the groovings being located proximal to each of the two seams of a single member sidewall in one planar surface of the second member, and each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial finger from one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation.

(b) a second pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, arrayed in parallel, are located in an opposing planar surface of the second member, with each of the groovings being located proximal to one of the elongate seams in the opposing planar surface, and each of the second pair of groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial second finger from a second sidewall end segment from the adjoining two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation;

(c) one opposing pair of the sidewall end segments of the second member are flared angularly relative to the intact first member sidewall and seat upon an external planar surface of the first member sidewall;

(d) while at least one of the other end segments of the second member has been stepped out flared outwardly and fixedly, so that:

(e) the opposing pair of sidewall end members of the second member are adapted to straddle the external dimensional span of the first intact tubular member.

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23. (Original-once amended) A rigid tubular member of a variable length formed from sheet steel stock, in which the member sidewalls are generally planar throughout their length and adapted to be custom-fitted and conjoined with at least one rigid surface of another member, the tubular member being provided with linear groovings along at least one planar surface to permit controlled separation of at least one sidewall thereof along the groovings, such tubular member comprising;
- (a) a transverse configuration which is rectangular in cross-section and has open longitudinal ends;
  - (b) a first pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, with each grooving being located coincident with the two seams of a contiguous member sidewall, and each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least an initial first finger on one sidewall end segment from the adjacent two sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation, and
  - (c) a second of pair of externally-placed, linear groovings, which are coincident with the two seams of the member opposing sidewall, and each of the groovings being of a depth sufficient to facilitate separation under force of at least a second finger of the adjacent sidewall end segments, while maintaining the structural integrity of the transverse dimension of the separated sidewall end segment at the end point of separation.